



## California Marine Life Protection Act Initiative

c/o California Resources Agency  
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311  
Sacramento, CA 95814

### Position Description and Request for Statements of Qualification

#### Media Relations Liaison

*Posted April 25, 2008*

Statements of qualifications are due no later than  
**5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 14, 2008** – position may be filled prior to this date

The Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) Initiative invites qualified parties to submit statements of qualifications for work in the MLPA South Coast Study Region through December 2009. Specifically, the MLPA Initiative is seeking a **media relations liaison** to develop, implement and regularly analyze a strategic, comprehensive and diversified media relations program to support the objectives of the MLPA Initiative through local, regional and national news exposure. Typical duties require exercise of professional judgment in communicating complex public policies and effective stakeholder and scientific contributions in a situation of highly diverse views and experiences.

The primary objective in this phase of the MLPA Initiative is to ensure development of sound draft proposals for marine protected areas in the MLPA South Coast Study Region (Point Conception in Santa Barbara County to the border with Mexico in San Diego County, California). Work will be privately contracted, using non-state funds. The initiative seeks qualified candidates who are well known in their respective field and have a solid, proven track record of project performance. The statements of qualifications will be reviewed by individuals with related competencies.

#### Background

The MLPA was signed into law in 1999 and directs the state to redesign California's system of marine protected areas to increase its coherence and effectiveness in protecting the state's marine life and habitats, marine ecosystems, and marine natural heritage, as well as to improve recreational, educational and study opportunities provided by marine ecosystems subject to minimal human disturbance.

The MLPA Initiative is a public-private partnership among the California Resources Agency, California Department of Fish and Game, and Resources Legacy Fund Foundation, designed to help the State of California implement the statutory objectives of the MLPA. Information about the MLPA Initiative is available at <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/mlpa/>.

## **Scope of Work**

The media relations liaison will support the MLPA Initiative in developing, implementing and regularly analyzing a strategic, comprehensive and diversified media relations program, and providing strategic communications advice to MLPA Initiative staff and project participants. Specific tasks may include:

- Analyze local, regional and national print, broadcast and online media coverage for trends that could influence media relations opportunities and challenges
- Proactively assess day-to-day media environment and utilize opportunities that are available for increased exposure, including identifying and utilizing free advertising space and time as available to promote the MLPA Initiative
- Identify negative or threatening media issues or inquiries and exhibit leadership in developing strategic and timely responses
- Develop and maintain mutually productive working relationships with key local, regional, statewide and national reporters and journalists, as well as representatives from new media/online sources and multi-cultural publications
- Create, develop and place MLPA Initiative updates in key target media from start to finish; this includes developing news releases, media advisories, news tips and other materials for the news media
- Exercise professional judgment in determining priorities for incoming media requests
- Provide strategic media relations counsel and preparation to MLPA Initiative leadership regarding interviews and potential interview opportunities
- Assist in coaching target staff and project participants in effective communication with the media and the public to improve the quality of presentations
- Prepare talking points and news releases for MLPA Initiative staff
- If time permits, in consultation with other MLPA Initiative staff and contractors, help prepare and edit publications for internal and external audiences, including electronic newsletters
- If time and funding permits, assess effectiveness of media plan in supporting MLPA Initiative objectives, by designing, administering and analyzing the results of various assessment tools (such as surveys, focus groups, and personal interviews)

## **Education, Skills and Experience Required**

This work requires analytical, organizational and advanced communication skills generally acquired through completion of a master's degree program in journalism, communications, English or a related discipline, and at least five years experience in communications such as newspapers, radio, television and public relations.

Necessary for this work are the ability to meet tight deadlines with minimal supervision, write effectively in several different formats and styles, extract data and key information from conversations and documents, maintain confidentiality, understand the components of effective print and online communications, edit copy, and utilize Microsoft Office (advanced skills in Word and PowerPoint are mandatory, Excel helpful).

Knowledge of marine policy is valuable, but not required. Experience in public policy processes, conservation planning, marine protected areas or marine technology is a benefit, as are experience working in multi-disciplinary teams and with stakeholder groups.

## Terms of Engagement

The media relations liaison will be an independent contractor to the MLPA Initiative, reporting to the MLPA Initiative program manager and executive director, but also coordinating and working closely with a public information officer from the California Department of Fish and Game. Contractor is expected to provide the equipment necessary to conduct this work, including a computer, wireless access, a cell phone and a facsimile.

- **Contract Period:** Will vary from 25-50% time from May 2008 to December 2009 with a contract extension possible. The time commitment is dependent upon a number of factors, including key decision points and the ultimate meeting schedule.
- **Location:** Contractor to be located in southern California, but travel will be expected within California.
- **Compensation:** Negotiable; no benefits. Compensation will depend on qualifications, past compensation history, and level of effort.

## Application

Each statement of qualifications should include:

1. Name of interested party (firm or individual).
2. Key contact information, including mail and email addresses, and telephone numbers.
3. A statement of key competencies. Please be specific about the competencies offered.
4. A list of relevant experience (including description of work products, time frames, fees).
5. Succinct biographical information of the individuals most relevant to these competencies who would undertake any work requested.
6. A list of five references.

Statements of qualifications, including the identified six elements, should be no longer than ten pages. Statements should be submitted electronically *no later than 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 14, 2008* to:

Ken Wiseman, Executive Director  
California Marine Life Protection Act Initiative  
MLPA.SOQs@resources.ca.gov

Please include in the subject line of your email message your name and "MR Liaison."

All work products will become property of the State of California. Academic and other publications based on the work are acceptable if acknowledgement is given to the funding support provided by the MLPA Initiative and the following statement is included in each publication: "The views expressed here are those of the author(s) and have not been reviewed by, nor are they approved by, the California Marine Life Protection Act Initiative or the State of California."